

The ROMANCE *of* THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

By FRANCIS G. BURGESS



THE Book of Common Prayer is much more than a manual of prayers for members of the Anglican communion. It is a monument of English literature, and a great human document. It is these phases primarily that are emphasized in this book, which tells the story of the Prayer Book from its inception to the present day. The author is a retired American clergyman resident in Italy.



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Book of Common Prayer

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FRANCIS G. BURGESS



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First Edition

DEDICATED
TO
"HER"
GOD BLESS HER!



WHAT? Prayer by the book? And common? Yes, why not?
The spirit of grace
And supplication
Is not left free alone
For time and place,
But manner too. To read, or speak by rote,
Is all alike to him that prays
In's heart what with his mouth he says.

They that in private by themselves alone
Do pray, may take
What liberty they please
In choosing of the ways
Wherein to make
Their souls' most intimate affections known
To Him that sees in secret, when
Th' are most conceal'd from other men.

But he that unto others leads the way
In public prayer
Should do it so
As all that hear may know
They need not fear
To tune their hearts unto his tongue, and say,
Amen; not doubt they were betray'd
To blaspheme, when they meant to have pray'd.

Devotion will add life unto the letter :

And why should not
That which authority
Prescribes, esteeméd be
Advantage got?

If th' prayer be good, the commoner the better ;
Prayer in the Church's words, as well
As sense, of all prayers bears the bell.

CHRISTOPHER HARVIE.

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Chapter I

A GREAT BOOK'S MOST DISTANT PAST



At the head of all English literature stands the English translation of the Bible. Next in rank stands that matchless volume, the Book of Common Prayer. Of this book it has been truly said that its fortunes are the romance of history.

Not alone have two thousand years of Christian experience left their tidemarks on its pages; between the lines, in the farther distance, we glimpse even the ancient story of the Jews. For not only was Christ Himself a Jew; so also were all His earliest followers. And when these Jews entered the Christian kingdom they brought with them their religious memories and habits, their Bibles, and their royal hymn book.

Their incomparable hymns all find place

in the Christian Prayer Book. Some of them, moreover, still serve as special anthems. Such, for example, is the Venite: "O come ye, let us sing unto the LORD." First in Jewish, and afterward in Christian service, this has been the invitatory hymn, at the opening of public worship, for actually thousands of years. Such use of it was centuries old, even in Jesus' time. And He habitually so heard and probably sang it.

Indeed, as the main architectural plan of the Roman courthouse is still found in the Christian church buildings of today, so too a broken outline of the Jewish services may be distinctly traced in the Book of Common Prayer. The great central service of the Holy Communion stands in direct succession to the whole impressive sacrificial system of the temple at Jerusalem; and the services of morning and evening prayer answer to the like services in temple and village synagogue, and show the same essential features.

The public reading of the Scriptures also suggests how closely the Christian worshipper is walking today in the footsteps of the Jew. The Old Covenant Bible, consisting of

only the Old Testament, was divided into two parts, the Law and the Prophets, and from these two sections were taken the Lessons of each daily service. So our present-day Bible is also divided into two volumes, and the Prayer Book daily services simply follow the ancient rule when each takes its two Lessons from the Old Testament and the New.

We read of the Apostle Paul, that when he visited the city of Antioch he "went into the synagogue on the sabbath day" and preached—"after the reading of the Law and the Prophets." And who can forget an earlier sabbath morning, in Nazareth of Galilee? It is the sunny springtime, and the villagers are streaming up the road to the morning service. Jesus is among them. And "he entered, as his custom was"—mark that eloquent example!—"into the synagogue on the sabbath day." At once His presence was noticed, for the village carpenter had already become a popular preacher, and His fellow villagers were proud of Him. So they invited Him to take part, that morning, both as reader and as preacher. A roll of parchment was handed to Him, the scroll of the

Prophecy of Isaiah. He opened to what was probably the Second Lesson, as regularly appointed for that service, and commenced to read. It was that beautiful passage beginning, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." And then, the reading finished, "he closed the book . . . and he began to say unto them, 'This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.' " So it is that now, at any Christian service, when we hear the Scriptures read, our thoughts may turn back to that sabbath morning in Galilee; and we may see Jesus standing there, reading from the roll of the evangel prophet.

Chapter II

THE HEART OF THE BOOK

FOR all Christians the Romance of the Book of Common Prayer began the night before the crucifixion. That night the soft glory of the full moon was flooding the streets and open squares of Jerusalem. The city was thronging, too, with the fullest tides of human life. Upward of three million in number, as statisticians have computed it, the great multitude had gathered at the Jewish capital for the springtime feast of the Passover. Within the city walls there was no possibility of shelter for such a host, and so it spread far out beyond the city gates, into the open country. Every village was full, and all along the surrounding hillsides that evening might be traced the lines of twinkling camp fires.

On the city streets men in the costumes of all nationalities were passing, their colors

now blending, now clashing, in the strangest variations of harmony and confusion. And on the air sounded the voices of all languages and dialects, from all around the golden sanded shore of the Great Sea. For these thronging visitors to Jerusalem had come thither as representatives of the peoples of the whole world. They were met here—though little they dreamed it—to be witnesses next day, for all generations, in all time, of the pivotal event of all human history.

Not far away, perhaps, from the temple courts a house was standing that night, built foursquare, and of one low story only, except that upon one corner rose what seemed a miniature of the main structure. This added chamber, reached by a stairway on the outside of the building, was the guest room. Here the Master and His little band of followers were gathered together for the last time. The sound of the scuffle of passing feet, and the voices and laughter of the crowd, were borne up to them from the street below; while through the open win-

dow, perchance, the light of the paschal moon was streaming in upon the floor. Before them on the table lay the Passover lamb, impaled on skewers in the form of a cross. The memorial feast, filled with thanksgiving for God's mercy in the past, was finished. The herbs, too, bitter with the bitterness of pain and death, had been eaten. Then the Christ, taking a piece of unleavened bread, blessed and brake it, and gave it to the others with these words, "This is my body, which is (given) for you: this do in remembrance of me." In the same way also He gave them to drink of a cup of wine, with the added bidding, "Drink ye all of it." So within the hours of one Jewish day, reckoned from sunset to sunset, the Son of Man kept the Passover with His disciples for the last time, set in its place the Christian Passover, and offered Himself upon the cross, as the one true Paschal Lamb of the ages.

So, in fine, the Christ instituted this monumental service to be forever the memorial of His own divine sacrifice, His inestimable love. And His disciples were not forgetful; they began at once its customary observance,

finding again, in their united worship, the Master's promised and loving presence.

Immediately the service began to take shape. At first more or less extempore in composition, yet it followed a certain order. By the middle of the fourth century this outline had developed into the form of four or five groups of liturgies. These differed somewhat in detail; yet they were all built on the same model. One of these liturgies, the Ephesine, was soon carried from Asia to Gaul, and from Gaul to ancient Britain. Later, when St. Augustine landed in Britain, in 597, he brought with him the slightly different Roman liturgy. Thus the previous British liturgy was altered a little. Following centuries, too, have brought further modifications. Yet the service has never lost its identity, because it has always preserved its original framework. So we today can trace its ancestry straight back, from the most modern edition of the Prayer Book to the times of the apostles.

The so-called Liturgy of Ephesus may not have come to us directly from Ephesus itself. It may so have been named simply be-

cause that proud city was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. Yet even so it must set us thinking of the loved disciple, who in his latter years was Bishop of Ephesus. On any Sunday morning, in the spaces of the Holy Communion service, we may descry that venerable figure, so familiar on the streets of the great pagan city. We may see in thought that noble head, crowned with the snows of nigh a hundred years, and look into those deep, dark eyes. And once more we may hear those dying words, sprung from his Master's own heart, "Little children, love one another."

In catacomb and on open mountaintop, in whitewashed chapel and in grand cathedral, amid assembled thousands and in lonely, silent sick rooms, in utmost simplicity and with most splendid ritual—ever since that Paschal night in Jerusalem, men have followed the Master's bidding and kept His memorial feast—and they will keep it till the end of time. The Lord's Supper, the Holy Communion, the Eucharist, the Mass—by various names it has been called, and most widely varying notions have men held of it.

Never, indeed, can it mean quite the same thing to any two human souls. For this great guild service of the Christian Kingdom is the sacrament of life—and of death—and of life beyond death. And all the sorrow and all the joy, and all the mystery of life, are mirrored in it. And it is filled with the Christian's unconquerable hope, and with that peace of God which passeth all understanding.

Chapter III

TWO ANCIENT BATTLE STANDARDS

 REDO! I believe! This, in all generations, has been the war cry of the Christian army. Probably the first Christians were content with the simple declaration, "I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God!" Amplification followed, however, in terms of Scripture statement, and so took shape the so-called Apostles' Creed.

Ancient legend will have it that this creed was composed personally by the twelve apostles, at their gathering at Pentecost, after Christ's ascension. Fancy even declares that each apostle, in turn, contributed one article. Peter said: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." Andrew said: "And in Jesus Christ his only Son

our Lord." And so it went on to the end. The old legend is picturesque, but the fact is, the creed is so named simply as derived from the apostles' teaching. It is an enlargement of the baptismal formula, "Into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In its original form, written in Greek, it can be traced back to about A.D. 175. Its present slightly expanded form is assigned to about the year 400.

Many have noticed that this creed is not a complete statement of Christian belief, and have wondered why. The explanation is found in the creed's immediate purpose. It originated as a reply to false teaching, and it presents only the points necessary to refute that teaching. As early as the second century sceptics were attacking the genuineness of Christ's humanity. He was not a real man, they said; but had only assumed a human body—or an imitation of one—as an actor puts on the costume of his part. In response to such heresy, we have in the creed the clear and emphatic statement that Jesus' manhood—in short, His entire personality—was absolutely real and true. In fine, the

creed declares Christ to the world as the supreme Figure of all human history.

The wording of this ancient symbol of our faith is as simple as the language of a child; yet every syllable is bathed in blood. It is an old battle standard, stained dark from many a scene of conflict. For the leaven of Christian teaching, dropped into the mass of Roman society, produced immediate and inevitable reaction. Men quickly saw that this teaching was no mere annoyance, but that it threatened the very life of the empire.

We remember what happened at Thessalonica, as reported in the Book of Acts. Thessalonica was an important and representative city, the capital of the province of Macedonia, just north of Greece, and a station on the great highroad between Italy and the east. Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica on the apostle's second great missionary journey. Three weeks of Paul's preaching won a partial success, but among the people generally it stirred deep resentment. And when a mob sought but could not discover

Paul and Silas, it seized instead their host and a few other followers, and dragged them before the magistrates. And now mark the charge against these arrested men: "These all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king, one Jesus." Here is the essential point of the whole matter. For this incident at Thessalonica is only one illustrative instance of what was occurring now on every side. The Roman empire had been created by force, and it was held together by force. In such a body any division of authority would be fatal. Therefore all authority was concentrated in the person of one irresponsible ruler, and to make his position absolutely secure he caused himself to be declared a god. But those novel sectarians, the Christians, so it was reported, proposed to set up a rival kingdom inside the empire, and to exalt their king above the emperor. Here then was the crucial test that they all must meet; they must disallow any allegiance to Jesus and worship the emperor. Refusal meant death.

One familiar and typical case, among thousands, is that of Polycarp. He was the

venerable Bishop of Smyrna, supposed to have been placed in authority there by St. John, and was perhaps the "angel" of that church addressed in the Apocalypse. Haled before the Roman proconsul, he was ordered to curse Jesus. But the old Bishop replied, "Fourscore and six years have I served Christ, and He hath done me no wrong. How can I now blaspheme my King and Saviour?" At once his judge ordered that he should be burned to death. And when the flames, sweeping around him, seemed to refuse to touch him, he was killed with the sword.

But Christianity spread more and more. At the same time spread also the fear of its disintegrating effect on the empire—fear that swelled into violent hatred. And this hatred broke out, again and again, in mad and bitter persecution.

The first outbreak took place in Rome, in the year of our Lord 64. One summer night—it was the eighteenth of July—some wooden buildings at the end of the Circus Maximus took fire. This fire burned over Rome for six days and nights, seemed for a moment to have been subdued, and then

raged for three days more. When the conflagration was finally extinguished two-thirds of the city lay in ruins. Now, it was popularly believed that the emperor himself had caused this disaster, to further some grandiose, selfish project. And this popular belief may well have been correct. To turn away suspicion from himself, however, Nero charged the catastrophe to the Christians. And then began their misery. Great companies of them were brought together, and put to death with every imaginable cruelty. Some were sewn up in wild beasts' skins, and thrown to fierce dogs, to be torn to pieces. Others were bound to mad bulls, to be dragged around till they were dead. Still others were crucified like their Master. And when night fell many were covered with pitch, and set up as great torches, to light the darkness by their flames. Meanwhile bestial Nero, in the guise of a jockey, drove around in his chariot to enjoy the fearful spectacle. But though man proposes, it is God who disposes. On the ground where all this took place, in the Circus of Caligula, we find today the gardens of the Vatican, and the

obelisk which marked the turning goal of Nero's chariot races stands now before the most magnificent church in Christendom.

This was only the first great persecution. Others followed in the next two hundred years—not continuous, but intermittent. Sometimes between them stretched long periods of comparative peace. But then suddenly, like a horrible volcano, persecution would break out again, and once more would follow scenes of terror. So the records of the Old Covenant heroes and heroines became the records of these Christian sufferers: they “were tortured,” they “had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword.” Let us remember, then, these noble souls, “of whom the world was not worthy.” Let us pray God for somewhat of their courage and faith. And whenever, in this our day, we repeat the ancient Apostles' Creed let us bethink us what we are saying.

Gradually the movement of persecution died out. Christianity's enemies discovered

at last a significant truth—one of those primary truths which have to be rediscovered by successive generations—that no man's thought or belief can be changed by physical force. Or as famous Theodoric, the barbarian king, later said, "No man can be made to believe against his will." Yet even so the Christians and their creed were not safe. We have seen that already, in the second century, attack had been made on the genuineness of Christ's human nature. Now His enemies aimed higher. In the fourth century they cast aspersions on His divinity. A strange and various company of false teachers made their appearance. Their teachings were extraordinary mixtures of Christian doctrine with oriental philosophy and Greek speculation. And the result of such teachings was successive and persistent attempts to belittle the Christ.

It is well-nigh impossible for us today to think ourselves back into the mental atmosphere of the early Christians. It is particularly difficult to form any clear notion of the heresies which troubled them. To our would-be practical, modern thought they seem ab-

surdly unreal. How then could they so stir men's hearts for battle? Thus we question now. Yet the essential fact is easy to appreciate. Because such theories represented Christ as in some way less than he claimed to be, they made him out dishonest, not to be trusted as a leader, and powerless as a Saviour. Now if the charge "You lie!" is thrown in our face today, will not our blood leap? And if a like ugly slander is spoken against one we love, are we not driven to hot and instant protest? Surely, then, we must know how the early Christians felt when popular teachers, fascinating many by their subtle philosophizing, cast reflection on the character of Jesus Christ.

Four great councils of the Church, followed by others only less important, were called to protest against such teachings, and to reëstablish the Christian faith. The first and most famous of these gatherings met in the year 325 at Nicaea, a town about sixty miles from Constantinople. It is known today as the great Nicene Council.

Arius, the original cause of the council,

was an unusually attractive character. He was a man of gentle manners and of fluent and persuasive speech. And his seeming modesty, shrewd logic, and sometimes brilliant eloquence drew to him many admirers and devoted followers. His teaching, known today as Arianism, was so subtle that it has always defied reduction to any definite form. When he was challenged personally, by his puzzled contemporaries, to state his teaching plainly, his reply amounted to this: that Christ was not co-eternal with the Father, but had been created by Him, and like ourselves was capable of sin.

As the place for the convening of the council, Nicaea was well chosen, for it stood not far from the center of the world of that time, and it was extraordinarily easy of access. It was built, like the city of God, four-square. In its surrounding wall, on each of the four sides there was a gateway, and the roads which ran out from these high gates connected with the main arteries of the Roman empire.

It was the early summer, about the first of June, and the city lay basking in the sum-

mer sunshine. The smiling valley round about was bright with flowers. The long Ascanian Lake, near by, was like a great mirror, reflecting the blue sky and floating clouds overhead. The neighboring mountains, clothed in the fresh green of the chestnut woods, looked down on the city and the lake. And in the far distance shone the sparkling sea.

Some three hundred bishops came to this famous convention at Nicaea, from all parts of the empire. Each bishop was accompanied by two of his clergy and by three slaves. Many other visitors too were drawn by curiosity, so that altogether the gathering numbered about two thousand persons.

The council, it would seem, met at first in a large church. Its chairman, at the opening sessions, was Hosius, the Bishop of Cordova, then the capital of Spain. Soon, however, the emperor, great Constantine, appeared. After his arrival the meetings were held in a hall in his palace, and he himself assumed the presidency.

Let us draw near in thought and take a look at these men, for their appearance is

strangely interesting and picturesque. Some are white-haired and soberly thoughtful; others are young men, with the enthusiasm of youth. And the assembled costumes are most various in both form and color, and suggest far scattered homes. Indeed, an olden writer tells us that this assembly reminded him of the crowds which gathered on the first Whitsunday; and that it looked like a huge wreath of flowers of all sorts, woven together. But one phenomenon particularly catches the eye. It is the physical condition of many of these men. They are scarred; they have been mutilated. Some have lost an eye or an ear. Some are lame, or have a useless hand, because leg or hand has been burned with a hot iron. Others in still other ways have been cruelly hurt. These are survivors, it is easy to see, from the fearful days of persecution. Therefore they are men in earnest. They know well why they have come to Nicaea. Their hearts are on fire to defend their Saviour, for whom they have suffered so bravely.

Up and down the great hall the company are ranged on long lines of chairs and

benches. In the center of the hall a throne has been placed, and on this throne a copy of the four Gospels, because this has been thought the next best thing to having Christ Himself sit there. At the head of the hall, on another throne, sits the emperor. He is a stalwart, broad-shouldered man, of commanding presence. His robe is of scarlet, covered with gold embroidery and flashing with precious stones, and on his feet are scarlet shoes. Yonder, at one side, stands Arius. He has the pale face of a scholar, his eyes are downcast, and he is wrapped in thought. Then, on the opposite side of the hall, we see the Christians' principal orator, short of stature, hardly distinguishable in the crowd. He is a young man, about twenty-five years old. A product of the famous schools of Alexandria, he is only a deacon today, but next year he will be the Bishop of the highly important see of Alexandria. For this is Athanasius, perhaps the greatest man in the assemblage.

The discussions of the council were prolonged and sometimes stormy, but they came at last to a definite conclusion. The old Apos-

bles' Creed was restated in stronger words, and this the Arians were asked to sign. By their refusal to sign they condemned themselves. This renewed declaration of faith was almost what we call today the Nicene Creed, the last paragraph being added at the next great council. It is now the most widely used creed in Christendom, and wellnigh all Christian people accept it.

Arius was by no means crushed by the outcome of the Nicene Council. New forces rallied to his side, and among these were some strong, though unprincipled men, all determined to undo the work of Nicaea. So a half-score of years passed by, and Arius and his teaching seemed more firmly established than ever. At last he was summoned to Constantinople, to appear before the emperor. Constantine asked him explicitly if he held the orthodox faith. Arius answered that he did, confirming his declaration with a solemn oath. "If you really do hold the faith," said the emperor, "you do well to swear; but if not, God will judge you for your oath."

At this time one of Arius' most zealous disciples sent a message to the Bishop of

Constantinople, the aged Alexander, now more than ninety years old, demanding that he receive the heresiarch: "We have brought him hither against your will; and tomorrow, against your will, he shall come to the Communion." It was Saturday afternoon. Alexander went to his church and threw himself on his face before the altar, in an agony of prayer: "If Arius is brought to the Communion tomorrow, let Thy servant depart. But if Thou wilt spare Thy Church—and I know Thou wilt—then, lest heresy enter the Church with him, take away Arius!"

Late that same afternoon, a smile on his face and a group of admirers at his side, Arius walked through the streets of the city like a returning conqueror. And the bystanders, as he passed, remarked his high spirits and his pride. But he had just reached the center of the forum when suddenly he stopped. An internal disorder seized him. A violent hemorrhage followed, and in a few minutes Arius was dead. The prayer of the old bishop had been heard, and the great heretic had gone to the judgment which he had himself invoked. The news of his

strange death sent a mingled thrill of horror and relief throughout the whole Church. And the Christians said it reminded them of the death of another betrayer of our Lord—Judas Iscariot.

Chapter IV

IN THE AGE OF THE BARBARIANS

T this time, far away in the northeast, on the broad plains of Asia, were dwelling some long forgotten folk. They were wild, fierce, hardly half-civilized tribes; and very few, in the empire at the south, had ever dreamed of their existence. Suddenly something happened in that far distant region. What gave the impulse no man will ever know, but that immense human mass began to move. It was like the progress of an enormous glacier. The tribes behind pushed those in front, till millions of men, women, and children were on the march.

At their head were the Goths, a tall and light-haired people, strong and virile, a striking contrast to the dark-haired and decadent Romans. Alert and fearless, the Goths moved southward, straight down to

the river Danube. Here they reached the northern boundary of the Roman empire, and here for many years they were content to stay. But behind them were the other tribes, pressing southward too. Till one day in January, 376, arose a cry along the Roman borders that made even the brave Goths tremble: "The Huns are coming! The Huns are coming!" For these wild ancestors of the Tartars and Russian Cossacks of today were a savage folk, the fiercest and most pitiless of all the nomad tribes. Their very appearance was fearful. They were short and swarthy, their noses so flat that their enemies declared that they had no noses, but only two black holes in their ugly faces; and their little, beady eyes shone with cruelty. Before such danger the Goths begged the hospitality of the empire, and the Romans granted their petition. The Roman soldiers went to their rescue, and night and day, in open boats—probably only hollowed logs—ferried them across the Danube. Men, women, and children, all were brought over, with their tents and their arms, and even their idols.

While the great Emperor Theodosius reigned he kept the barbarians quiet and his whole empire in order; but when he died, in 395, the empire began to fall to pieces. At once the Goths seized their opportunity. They seated their commander, Alaric, on his battle shield, and lifted him high above their heads, and in a storm of war cries carried him through the camp. And then, with Alaric at their head, they started southward. The Roman army met them on their way, however, and drove them back with fearful slaughter. And with joyful celebration Rome kept holiday. The Circus Maximus was filled with tens of thousands of spectators, and the high stone seats were gay with flags and festoons and brilliant dresses. Once more the cruel games were held, and gladiators fought with wild beasts, and for the last time the great circus ran with blood. And yet, after this holiday the cowardly emperor was still afraid, and fled northward to Ravenna. Then the Bishop of Rome slipped into the emperor's place. And so began the power and pride of the papacy.

Yet the Goths' defeat was only temporary,

and they soon moved forward again. This time other tribes which had crossed the Danube came to join them, and with such swollen ranks this terrible army marched down to Rome. The city made brave and prolonged resistance, but at last famine and the horrors of the plague overcame it. Then the gates were opened, the barbarians came pouring in, and imperial Rome was given up to pillage and slaughter. Thousands of captives were carried away, and great quantities of gold and silver and precious objects, and the city was left desolate.

Still unsatisfied, Alaric determined to push farther southward. He had gone but little way, however, when he met that dark all-conqueror, death. Then what a funeral his followers gave him! They turned aside the river Busentinus—now the Vossente—out of its course, and in the broad bed of the river they made King Alaric's strange, deep grave. They killed the king's war horse. They clad the king in his helmet and armor, as if for battle, and mounted him on his horse. Then they placed horse and rider in their lonely resting-place, and turned the river back into

its course. Finally, that the secret of that strange burial might never be told, the prisoners of war, who had been compelled to dig that grave, were killed on the river bank. And to this day still is the burial place of the King of the Goths unknown.

And still the old world could not have peace. Now the unspeakable Huns started out for war. They had an army of six hundred thousand men, with Attila, "the Scourge of God," at its head. First they turned northward into Gaul. There all the northern peoples soon banded together to oppose them. As later the nations were to join forces against Napoleon, to defeat him at Waterloo, so now these forces were gathered against the Huns. The two great hosts met on a broad plain near Chalons, on the river Marne. And there, in the year 452, on that field today twice memorable, was fought the first great battle of the Marne. That night the stars looked down, some say, on three hundred thousand dead; but the barbarians had been conquered, and civilization and the world had been saved.

And still the bloodthirsty Huns could not

rest. They turned back along the track of the Goths, and with grim determination they too marched the long miles down to the old world's capital. No warriors were ready to defend the city, for Rome's proud armies were no more. But one brave man, Leo the Great, Bishop of Rome, took his life in his hands and went to meet the dreaded foe. Straight out he walked to the camp of the Huns, some distance beyond the city gates. And there the noble bishop pleaded with Attila to have pity and to spare the city, and offered him an immense gift of treasure if he would. "The pressing eloquence of Leo," says the historian Gibbon, "his majestic aspect and sacerdotal robes excited the veneration of Attila for the spiritual father of the Christians." And the terrible "Scourge" listened and consented. He turned away and left the city untouched. And the next year he died in his tent on the Danube.

Three years after this first battle of the Marne one more barbarian tribe, the Vandals, appeared before the gates of Rome. Once more brave Leo, this time at the head of his clergy, singing Psalms as they

marched, went out to meet the enemy. And again the bishop pleaded so eloquently that Genseric, the famous Vandal general, promised too that he would be merciful. His soldiers spent two weeks in Rome, however, rioting and plundering. Then they gathered together all the treasure they could find and departed. With the Vandals' departure Rome's ruin seemed complete, and in 476 the senate took the imperial crown and purple robe, and sent them to the world's new capital, Constantinople. Plain confession that great Rome had fallen, and that the mighty Roman empire had come to an end.

"But what had the barbarians to do," one may ask, "with the Book of Common Prayer?" Certainly no great world movement can ever take place without influencing men's thoughts and consequently their prayers. And the incursion of the barbarians was no exception to this truth.

Close to the heart of the Prayer Book today we find those little gems of prayer, the collects. They are almost perfect in their composition, and through many centuries they have voiced the hopes and fears of

hearts unnumbered. Well may one speak of "the deep undertone of devotion which rings out from the old collects of the Church like the sound of ancient bells."

Now the most ancient source to which we can trace any of these little prayers is the Sacramentary of Leo the Great, who was Bishop of Rome from 440 to 461. He was a man of notable force of character, as witness his courage before Attila. He was gifted also with political genius. And it is for these endowments that posterity has named him "Great." His ability and success, however, led him finally into overweening conceit, so that he was the first to assert the supremacy of the Roman bishop over all other bishops, and to claim for himself alone the title of Pope.

His Sacramentary, a handbook which he compiled, contained the service of Holy Communion, together with a number of collects. Some of these little prayers, seven of which are found now in the Prayer Book, probably were old, even in that day, while others the bishop composed himself. One of the latter, that for the Fifth Sunday after

Trinity, is believed to have been written after he had saved his country from Attila, "the Scourge of God." And very clearly to-day we can see that troubled time mirrored in these eloquent lines: "Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness." Justly it has been said: "When the Goths, the Huns, and Vandals were hovering over the moribund Roman Empire, like a flight of vultures preparing to pounce upon a dying camel in the desert, as soon as the breath is out of his body, there certainly was some point, and there was likely to be some sincerity, in such a prayer." In our time too, well may we offer again this same petition for God's overruling providence. That ever, generation after generation, out of evil He may bring His own abiding good.

But the age of the barbarians did not end at the battle of the Marne, or with the death of Attila and Genseric. The virility of those strong peoples of the north was not so quickly exhausted. They were the rude and

fearless pioneers of modern democracy. They were to contend for many years with Roman imperialism. And the struggle was to fill these years with suffering and anxiety and terror.

When the Little Augustus, the last Emperor of Rome, was thrust from his throne in 476, the government was already in the hands of Odoacer, a bandit who had entered the imperial guard and had thrust himself forward in rank till he had made himself the first barbarian King of Italy. He held the reins for about the space of half a generation. Then a greater commander, Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, invaded Italy. Apparently by his order, Odoacer was assassinated. Theodoric then assumed the power, put the whole country in order, and established his capital at Ravenna.

Exactly forty years after the battle of the Marne, and only one year before the arrival of Theodoric in Italy, Gelasius became Bishop of Rome. It is easy to imagine the condition of the country during the four short years of Gelasius' episcopate. It was a period of revolution. Neither property nor

life was safe. Lawlessness was in rebellion against the new dictator, and robbery and assassination were rife throughout the land. What is true, therefore, of Pope Leo's Sacramentary is still more conspicuous in that of Gelasius. Twenty-nine collects and other prayers are traceable to his handbook, and again and again in their brief lines we hear the hearts of the people, crying for protection and for peace.

Listen, for instance, to these petitions: "Defend us, thy humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries"; "O Lord, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness"; ". . . that, among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, they may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready help"; ". . . that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found."

A particularly beautiful gift from the Sacramentary of Gelasius is the Collect for Peace, in Evening Prayer. This prayer "perhaps is dearer to the heart of the devout than any other in the whole Prayer Book, the Lord's own prayer only excepted." And doubly eloquent its words become when we think of those anxious days in which it first was offered: "O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee, we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness."

Finally, from the same source, and still more vivid, is the little prayer which follows, for aid against the perils of the night. For here we must remember that in those terrible years when the barbarians were overrunning Europe, the dark night hours were everywhere hours of fear. Well might the prayer go up from every Christian home at nightfall: "Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy

defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ."

One more Sacramentary demands our notice. This little book bears the name of Gregory the First, afterwards known as Gregory the Great. Here is an unusually interesting character. Dowered with noble birth, wealth, and executive ability, Gregory was consecrated Bishop of Rome in the year 590. He found his diocese in sad condition. The Lombards, the warriors of the long spears, the fiercest of all the barbarians except the Huns, had conquered northern Italy, and the whole country had been wasted by war and famine and pestilence. Churches and monasteries had been destroyed, and the clergy were few and discouraged. Gregory declared the Church to be like an old and battered ship, leaking on every side.

At once he proceeded to set his diocese in order. He provided for the better education of the clergy, and for the improvement of the church services, especially the music. Incidentally he introduced the mode of chant-

ing which bears his name, the Gregorian chant. Lavishly generous in his charities, he maintained for himself a life of monastic simplicity. How simply he lived is suggested by a humorous letter, addressed to an agent in Sicily. The bishop writes: "You have sent one wretched horse and five good asses. The horse I cannot ride, because he is wretched; nor the good beasts, because they are asses."

This great bishop laid the foundation of the temporal power of the popes, not of deliberate purpose, but by force of political conditions. Because the government of the empire had passed over to Constantinople, and the kingship of Italy was now located at Ravenna, Gregory, an able leader, became practically king at Rome. He was acknowledged as head and arbiter in temporal affairs as well as in spiritual.

Of the two reasons why Gregory is specially remembered one is his declaration regarding the authority of the Roman bishop. For this is in striking contrast to the assertion of Leo the Great, and still more to the later, consummate arrogance of Gregory the Seventh, or Hildebrand. Though circum-

stances did give to Gregory the First extraordinary eminence in civil matters, yet he never made claim to supreme ecclesiastical position. On the contrary, when a certain bishop addressed him as if he were at the head of all other bishops, this was Gregory's response: "I pray your most sweet holiness to address me no more with the proud title of 'Universal Pope.' Away with words which puff up vanity and wound charity." And to an ambitious eastern patriarch he wrote after this fashion: "This I declare with confidence, that whoso designates himself as Universal Priest, or, in the pride of his heart, consents to be so named, he is the forerunner of Antichrist."

Our second and more personal reason for remembering Pope Gregory is his sending of the second Augustine to England. This well-loved story has been told so many times that one hesitates to tell it again. We must recall how, before he was bishop, Gregory noticed those flaxen haired Yorkshire boys standing in the Roman slave market; how he remarked that those young Angles looked like angels; and how, when he was told that they

came from the kingdom of Deira and their king was Aella, he declared that they must be saved from God's wrath (De-ira) and taught to sing Alleluia. We must remember, also, how, when he was prevented from going to Britain himself after his ordination, he sent Augustine in his place. And further we must not forget that when Augustine landed in England, in 597, he found the Kentish queen already a Christian, and that the British bishops could show him their records from very early times. And today old St. Martin's Church, on the outskirts of Canterbury, with Roman bricks in its walls, carries our thoughts straight back to the still older St. Martin's, in which Queen Bertha used to worship.

Twenty-nine collects trace their ancestry to the Sacramentary of Gregory the Great. One of these—in the Penitential Office—makes us think of those slave boys, when we pray, “though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose us.” In several collects we are reminded of the “adversity” from which Christian people were suffering in those days,

while their Christian spirit found eloquent expression in the collect for the fourth Sunday after Trinity: "O God, the protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; Increase and multiply upon us thy mercy; that, thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal." And another brief prayer, so wise for the people of Gregory's time in their discouragement, is equally good for our use, too, in our ease-loving age: "Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by thee be plenteously rewarded."

Chapter V

THE SERVICES OF THE HOURS

S GREGORY the Great passed from view a remarkable institution moved to the front. Monasticism was no novel invention. Its origin was already ancient; but now at length it was coming into its own. Now it was to enter upon its great rôle in the evolution of European civilization. The barbarians of the north had broken up and destroyed the Roman Empire, and through many years Europe had been plowed by war and harrowed by misery. Now, in its desolation, it was ready for new planting. Here the monasteries found their opportunity, and they used it well. Over a large part of Europe, and for many generations, they carried on their invaluable labors.

In England the beneficent work of the monks is especially in evidence. Here they

held the front of the stage for upward of five hundred years, from St. Augustine to the Norman conquest. All over England, and even in Scotland and Ireland, we find their abbeys today. Some of these are in ruins—Fountains, Tintern, Glastonbury, Melrose; and the others are roofless, windowless, their walls broken and crumbling—but they are of exquisite and majestic beauty. And when in thought we rebuild them, and fill them with human souls, and surround them with the life of their time, they become singularly fascinating, for they are monuments to English monasticism in its prime. They are reminders of a life which at its best was extraordinarily happy, and fruitful in good works.

Monastic duties were of three kinds: "*opus Dei, labor, et lectio*"—religious worship, manual labor, and study. First in point of time, of course, must be the work of the hands. Shelter must be built, clothing must be made, and food must be prepared; and, of prime importance, the land must be cultivated and planted. The cynic of today may regard the landscape setting of an English abbey with an easy sneer. The green hillsides,

covered, perhaps, with feeding cattle; the winding stream or placid lake; the sweep of the fertile valley. "Ah!" he says, "those monks knew well where to build their homes." And indeed they often did choose well. But sometimes they had no choice. Then by wise and patient toil they turned stony fields or stagnant swamps into smiling farms. But whatever conditions they found at hand, they always covered the countryside eventually with luxuriant beauty.

And the influence of their example has traveled far. Before their time such work had always been done by slaves. For a free-man, therefore, to touch a spade was considered a black disgrace. Brigandage and every allied crime he deemed much more honorable. What was the amazement, then, of knights and chieftains when they saw the good monks, whom they sincerely respected, digging and sowing and reaping. It was a pointed lesson in the dignity of labor. "Beware of idleness," famous St. Benedict wrote to his monks, "as the greatest enemy of the soul." And again he admonishes them, "No person is ever more usefully employed than

when working with his hands or following the plow, providing food for the use of man." And this truth, which in their turn the monks taught their neighbors, has not been forgotten to this day. In our time the loafer is looked down upon, while the honest workman is everywhere held in honor.

But neither did the monks neglect their studies. When sunset brought an end of their labors in the field, many long night hours especially they devoted to their books, patiently deciphering and copying manuscripts by a dim and flickering light, while outside the farms and villages were asleep. And gradually they turned their settlements into centers of education and charity. The monasteries became schools and colleges, seminaries, libraries, and hospitals, and societies for the relief of suffering. And thousands whom they helped must have blessed them with heartfelt gratitude.

Among the individual histories of the various abbeys there is none other so interesting as that of Glastonbury. Especially beloved is the legend that its founder was Joseph of Arimathea. Where he thrust down his black-

thorn pilgrim staff, there was to be the monastery's site. The first building on that spot was a small chapel, its sides of twigs, woven like a basket and plastered with clay. As Tennyson sings:

“ . . . Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arviragus,
Gave him an isle of marsh wheron to build;
And there he built with wattles from the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore.”

Here was the mystic Isle of Avilion, on which King Arthur was buried, and of which Tennyson again sings:

“Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea.”

Other hands, of later generations, raised more and ever grander edifices; till finally the monks were banished, and their homes must fall to pieces. Yet still are found there blackthorn growths which claim descent from Joseph's staff. And glorious ruins, fragments of walls that were proud and unmarred seven centuries ago, today keep silent watch over the memories of the past.

Beautiful are the stories that have come down to us from the springtime of the monasteries. There is the pleasant tale of Caedmon, a simple herdsman, a lay brother of Whitby Abbey about the year 680. In that time, at country festivals, it was a favorite amusement to take turns at making extempore verse to the accompaniment of the harp. But when Caedmon saw the harp coming toward him he would always rise and go away. One night, however, as he was sleeping in the stable beside his cattle, One came to him and said, "Sing, Caedmon, some song to me." "But I cannot sing," he replied; "this is why I left the feast and came hither." "Be that as it may, you shall sing to me." "What shall I sing?" "The beginning of created things." In the morning the cowherd told his dream at the abbey. There the abbess and the monks wrote out for him the Bible story of creation. And the next morning Caedmon brought it back to them rendered into verse. Such was the beginning of English poetry.

So also from that ancient historian, the Venerable Bede, men learned the tranquil

pleasure that is to be found in study. "I have spent my whole life in one monastery," he says; and in that lifetime he produced forty-five volumes. It was just before Ascension-tide, in the year 735, and the aged scholar lay dying. He had been working of late on a translation of St. John's Gospel, but now his strength was failing fast. On his last morning he called his pupils, and bade them write from his dictation. As the day drew to its close one pupil told him, "There is yet one sentence unwritten, dear Master." "Write it quickly," said the dying man. "It is finished now," replied the boy presently. "You speak truth," said the master; "all is finished now." And lying on the pavement, with his head in his pupils' arms, the old scholar chanted softly the Gloria in Excelsis, and passed away.

But that feature of the monastic life which reveals to us the soul of the institution is its system of religious worship. This is known as the Services of the Hours, or the Divine Office. There was a fancy in that age for the mystic number seven, and so it was that every day the monks had their seven services; be-

sides one at midnight, known as Nocturns. These services differed slightly from one another, and as a whole they varied considerably in different monasteries; but they all consisted mainly of brief prayers, with selections from the Scriptures, generally from the Psalms. The habit of holding a midnight service was probably inherited from the years of persecution, while the other services were associated in thought with Christ's sufferings on the cross. The Services of the Hours were named and arranged, therefore, in this order:

- (1) Matins or Lauds, at daybreak—in practice generally following immediately after Nocturns
- (2) Prime, or first hour service, at 6 in the morning
- (3) Tierce, or third hour service, at 9 o'clock
- (4) Sext, or sixth hour service, at noon
- (5) Nones, or ninth hour service, at 3 in the afternoon
- (6) Vespers, just before sunset
- (7) Compline, or completing service, at bedtime

Or, to quote the ancient verse :

“At matins bound, at prime reviled,
Condemned to death at tierce,
Nailed to the cross at sext, at nones
His blessed side they pierce.

“They take him down at vespertide,
In grave at compline lay ;
Who thenceforth bids his Church observe
Her sevenfold hours alway.”

The years and the centuries fly past, and bring us down to one of the turning points of English history. The year 1066 saw William, Duke of Normandy, enter England as conqueror. This French invader was a great man. In frame and muscle, in passion and determination, he was a giant. A characterization, moreover, often carelessly bestowed, he fully deserved: he was a born leader of men. In battle he was terrible, and in the extermination of his enemies he was ruthless; yet in attack he was always wary, and he shrewdly knew when to hold his hand. And when the work of destruction was finished, and England lay desolate at his feet, he was masterly in rebuilding. In capacity for organization he had the genius of a statesman. Like

every truly great man, too, he could wisely choose his helpers; like the great Lincoln, "he knew a man when he saw him." And despite his sometime fierceness, and like every full-sized personality, he had ever the saving grace of humor, as is shown in this anecdote: Lanfranc was an eminent Norman scholar, and as prior of a French monastery which he had made a center of education, had the misfortune to offend Duke William. In consequence, the Duke bade him leave the country. So, on a poor lame horse, the best the monastery could afford, Lanfranc began his journey. The Duke, however, was impatient, and rode after him and bade him hurry. When coolly the Prior answered, "Give me a better horse, and I will go faster," Duke William laughed, both horses were turned around, and Lanfranc became the Duke's most trusted counsellor. Later the Duke summoned him to England, to help him there, and finally made him Archbishop of Canterbury.

A more famous figure in the work of reconstruction in England is Count Osmund, known today as St. Osmund. This Norman

nobleman had been a brave and distinguished soldier. While most of the military leaders of that day were little better than brigands, and many of the Norman nobles were men of low character and stained with vice, Osmund, on the contrary, was a high-minded man. He scorned pillage and rioting, and in the midst of immorality he kept himself pure. Fond of books, he also made himself a scholar. In fine, he was noble in character as well as by title. On the bloody field of Hastings he brilliantly helped to win the Norman victory. In recompense the Duke first made him his chancellor and afterwards appointed him Bishop of Sarum—now Salisbury.

In this position Osmund found peculiar opportunity for his talents, his learning, and his devotion. He reorganized his diocese thoroughly, framing for it a new constitution and making it a model for all other dioceses. A secondary and later result of his efforts was the revision of the service books. Around the ancient Services of the Hours had gradually sprung up a small library of handbooks, and afterward these in turn had been condensed into a few volumes. The chief of these

latter were the Breviary, containing the daily services; the Missal, containing the Communion Service; and the Manual, containing the Baptismal and other Occasional Offices. Among the dioceses generally these little books were now reëdited, and in Osmund's diocese this work was particularly well done. And so the Sarum Use, as it was called, finally supplanted the services of all other dioceses, and became the accepted use for public worship in all England. And it continued to hold this place until the Reformation.

Many of the prayers in the present-day Prayer Book, including two-thirds of the Sunday collects, have come from that old Use of Sarum. Incidentally, too, the brief, alternate form of absolution introduced in the last American edition of the book is taken directly from the Sarum Missal: "The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you Absolution and Remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit." This is not to say, however, that all such prayers originated at Sarum. Far otherwise. For we

have seen how many of them were in use in Britain in very early days. Rather, by passing through the turmoil of the Norman conquest these prayers gained new associations and added suggestiveness.

For England was by no means conquered at the battle of Hastings. It took Duke William and his Norman soldiery five years to subdue the country. And these were long years, of fire and sword, of famine and massacre, of misery and terror. Afterward, too, many more years were needed to heal the wounds of war. Now we have followed the Services of the Hours through a twofold period. Between the lines, as we read the services, we see the monks of successive generations, busy at their farming, their studies, and their prayers. This, of course, against the background of the rude conditions of the time. Then, later, we see the Normans landing at Pevensey, we hear the roar of battle, Duke William and Lanfranc and Count Osmund pass before us; and we witness the unhappy years of the country's suffering. Altogether it is a long review, most vivid and impressive.

As an example of this twofold experience of many of the prayers, we may note again that brief prayer for aid against the perils of the night. Used first in the time of the barbarians, this precious prayer descended to us in the Services of the Hours. At compline every night, and in every monastery, through many years, so the monks prayed for God's loving oversight. And well they might. For as in the lawlessness of the earlier time, so also in the unsettled period of the Middle Ages, still the nights were full of danger. There was no protection by watchmen or police. Therefore every house was barred at nightfall; the palaces of the great were grim fortresses; and whether in open country or in the dark, unlighted streets of the city, no man dared venture outside his door at night, unless he was fully armed. This, too, we may remember, when we use the prayer today.

It will help us, perhaps, to visualize more clearly those ancient days, and to put ourselves in the place of the people, if we glance at their religious services in their own old-time speech. For example, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer:

"I beleue in god, fadir almygti, makere of heuene and of erthe: and in iesu crist the sone of him, oure lord, oon alone: which is conceyed of the hooli goost: born of marie maiden: suffride passioun undir pounce pilat: crucified, deede, and biried: he went doun to hellis: the thridde day he roos agen fro deede: he steig to heuenes: he sitteth on the rigt syde of god the fadir almygti: thenns he is to come for to deme the quyke and deede. I beleue in hooli goost: feith of hooli chirche: communynge of seyntis: forgiueness of synnes; agenrising of fleish, and euerlastynge lyf. So be it."

"Oure fadir, that art in heuenes, halewid be thi name: thi rewme come to thee: be thi wille do as in heuene and in erthe: oure eche daies breed gyue us to day: and forgyue us our dettise, as we forgeuen to oure dettouris: and ne lede us into temptacioun; but delyuere us fro yuel. So be it."

Two miles to the northward of the superbly beautiful Salisbury Cathedral—"poetry in stone," indeed—are the remains of the still older Salisbury, or Sarum. Modern excavators, digging into the long, grass-

covered mounds, have brought to light much of this ancient town, and so revealed its long-time importance. Duke William and Count Osmund were familiar figures on its streets in its prosperous days, eight centuries and a half ago; yet even to their generation the place was already venerable. For the massive ruins of its great walls and battlements remind us that for many years before their time it had been a military stronghold. Ancient Briton, Roman, Saxon, Dane, and Norman, all in turn occupied it. And all these centuries have left their memories in the Book of Common Prayer.

Chapter VI

IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE PEOPLE

HE English monasteries had their day, like all things human. Then they decayed and became corrupt. And early in the sixteenth century, by act of Henry the Eighth, they were dissolved. A new and brighter light was on the horizon now, and already this light had begun to have an incalculable effect. The discoveries of Copernicus had unlocked the mysteries of the universe; the printing press was entering on its amazing career; Vespucci and Columbus discovered a new world beyond the Atlantic; and, in particular, the fall of Constantinople had sent the Greek scholars in flight to Italy, and manuscripts of Homer, Plato, Sophocles, Aristotle, had been gathered for discussion in the Oricellari Gardens at Florence. Then English scholars

visited that marvellously intellectual city, and brought the new learning back with them to England. Here it found three strong champions, Colet, Erasmus, and More. Great-minded men, they were all far in advance of their time; so far, in fact, that even today society has not fully caught up with them. Erasmus was one of the broadest-minded men to be found in any generation, More was a profounder thinker, while Colet stands closest to our line of thought in this connection. Colet's wish to know well the Greek language was solely that he might better understand the New Testament and the teaching of Jesus Christ, and so thereafter work for more earnest and intelligent religion among the English people. Erasmus powerfully seconded this effort when he translated the New Testament into English. And More's "*Utopia*," with some lesser writings of smaller men, helped to the same end. For the reformation which followed now in the path of religion, both in England and on the continent, was simply one phase of Europe's wonderful reawakening.

In 1509 Henry the Eighth ascended the

throne as King of England. He felt no slightest interest in things religious; he was incapable of such feeling. But he recognized in the Bishop of Rome a rival claimant to authority in England, and therefore with strong and stubborn will he set himself to break the Pope's power and to drive him out of the country. For example, the king closed the monasteries merely because they were centers of influence for the Pope. Yet this determined ambition of the king, although moved only by selfishness, inevitably and greatly helped the work of reformation in the Church. Henry was a disreputable character, and left a foul blot on the history of his country; but the Almighty King, who maketh the wrath of man to praise Him, saw fit to use even this selfish despot in the realization of His own designs.

At this point the most outstanding figure is that of King Henry's friend, Thomas Cranmer. The Archbishop, appointed by the king, was a mixed character—like all of us. He had a weak side; let those stone him who have none. Yet, taken all in all, he was a great man, and perhaps has never been fully

appreciated. At the worst he was a coward, and an arrant coward. And he stained himself darkly with guilt in consequence. There seemed no debasement of conscience to which he was not willing to stoop if his unprincipled king asked it of him. And even toward the last, when his enemies tempted him with lying promises, six times he subscribed to what in his heart he did not believe. But why such cowardice? There were two reasons. The lesser of these was his devotion to his king. For that kind of personal loyalty was of a nature which in these democratic days we can hardly understand. In Cranmer's time it was the highest form of patriotism. And it held him absolutely faithful to his king, despite that king's faults, till Henry's death. But the fundamental and broader reason for Cranmer's cowardice our modern experience should enable us to understand particularly well. The Archbishop was a nervous wreck. Any man who has been a victim of nervous prostration ought to sympathize with Thomas Cranmer. As a boy he was abnormally sensitive and timid, and a brutal schoolmaster beat and abused him till

there was no more spirit in him. His heart was crushed and his nervous system ruined. He had thereafter a perfect terror of all suffering. All the more admirable, therefore, was the constancy with which he stood at his post, while advising others to fly for their lives, in the days of Bloody Mary. And still more admirable was his noble conduct at the end. Well may we reverence the bravery of any of the Christian martyrs, but in the case of the aged Archbishop—standing like a statue, his guilty right hand held out into the flames—that magnificent courage becomes fairly awful.

Meanwhile, on one point we all may envy Cranmer; he accomplished a life work which is monumental. It will endure till the English language is forgotten. For we have arrived now at a notable stage in the romance of the Book of Common Prayer. The Bible once more had been translated into the "language understood of the people." Now the people's religious services were to keep it company. At the same time, too, they must be cleaned and put in order. It was to be a

grand work, and Cranmer was to be its leader.

Of late years an astonishing amount of sheer foolishness had crept into the service books. One specimen may suffice us here. It is a passage appointed as the regular fourth lesson for the eighteenth day of August, the anniversary of a victory. And here it is: "Philip the Fair, King of the French, in the year 1304, about the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, having set forth with his brothers Charles and Louis and a large army into Flanders, pitched his tent near Mons, where was a camp of the rebel Flemings. But when on the eighteenth of August, which was the Tuesday after the Assumption of St. Mary, the French had from morning till evening stood on the defence, and were resting themselves at nightfall, the enemy, by a sudden attack, rushed on the camp with such fury that the body-guard had scarce time to defend him.

"Response: Come from Lebanon, my spouse; come, and thou shalt be crowned. The odor of thy sweet ointment is above all perfumes."

Even worse than this foolishness was the

superstition with which the services had become saturated. A sufficient witness to this superstition is furnished by one suggestive fact. About two-thirds of the Sunday collects, as we have seen, are translations from the ancient Latin. On the contrary, almost all the saints' day collects are original in the English, because the Latin ones had become, for the most part, merely weak petitions to the saints for their intervention. Such prayers were gangrened, and had to be cut out altogether.

In general, the services had become disorderly and confused. And they were so entangled in rules and directions that "there was more business to find out what should be read, than to read it when it was found out." Finally and particularly there was urgent need to translate the prayers into the everyday language of the people. For, as one writer declared, not more quaintly than truly, "The party that understandeth not the pith and effectualness of the talk that he frankly maketh with God, may be as a harp or pipe having a sound, but not understanding the noise that itself hath made."

The work of translation had had a tentative beginning long ago. Half a dozen centuries before the Reformation the monks used to help the poorest among their neighbors by providing them with horn-books. To make a horn-book a monk would take a small piece of board and cut it into rectangular shape, leaving at one end a projection like a stubby tail, to serve as a handle. A hole also was made in this handle, large enough to admit the head of a peg, so that the board might be hung up. Then on this board a thin sheet of horn was tacked. And finally the monk carefully engraved on the horn, in English, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and the Angelic Salutation: "Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." This odd help to devotion could be carried any day to service, and between times it could be hung on the cottage wall. And soon all the family, old and young, would know its contents by heart.

For wider distribution—and these were still in use in Cranmer's time—little books called Primers were compiled. These con-

tained a considerable part of the public services. For nucleus they had the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and generally the Ten Commandments. The remainder of their contents varied according to the judgment of the editor. Of course the horn-books were only a very minor expedient. The demand for the Primers, though they were so long in use, was very limited, because few could read, and still fewer could afford to buy a book—an expensive luxury in those days. However, such were the first tricklings of the spring.

The first part of the services now to appear in English was the Litany. "*The Litany*," we are accustomed to say, as if there had never been any other except the one with which we are familiar. Yet in the course of history there have been many litanies. In fact, there was one in English more than a century before Cranmer was born. An earlier example of a litany we find in Augustine's day. That old historian Bede tells us that when Augustine and his monks first caught sight of Canterbury they lifted up a cross and a great picture of Christ, and then went

forward, singing, as they marched, a litany in Latin. For in early ages it was the custom to use a litany like a processional hymn.

Indeed, more than a hundred years before Augustine, in the fifth century, this practice had already become common in Gaul, especially in times of unusual calamity. For instance, about the year 470 there was a series of earthquakes on the borders of the Auvergne mountains, which continued for a whole twelvemonth. The mountains are of volcanic origin, and there seemed to be again some volcanic activity below the surface. So followed shock after shock, to the dismay of the inhabitants. At the same time, we remember, the terror of the barbarians was spreading across Europe, and famine and pestilence also were sowing death broadcast: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

The town of Vienne, in the valley of the Rhone, suffered particularly severely from the earthquakes, till finally, on Easter Even, the day before Easter, during the service of the Mass, an extraordinarily violent shock

made the church sway and totter. The people rushed out of the building, leaving the bishop, Mamertus, alone before the altar. And there, while still on his knees, Mamertus determined that the three days before Ascension Day should be devoted to special prayers for God's mercy, and especially for the renewal of crops and harvest on the desolate farms. So the bishop thereafter composed a special litany for the occasion. And we can see and hear those sad-faced people now, earnestly chanting the petitions of their litany, as they walk in solemn procession along the country road and across the stricken fields. This, by the way, was the origin of Rogation or Asking Days.

The present Litany in the Book of Common Prayer is a masterpiece of composition and reëditing, and its artisan was Archbishop Cranmer. He had before him particularly three items of source material: a Latin litany then in use; a litany which had been put forth by Martin Luther; and some prayers, of the nature of a litany, from the hand of St. Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople. The Latin litany could serve as a basis, though it was

quite inadequate, and moth-eaten with superstition; Luther's litany would be suggestive of the new ideas of the Reformation; St. Chrysostom's litany would afford enrichment from Christianity's early years.

It is interesting to notice, in passing, that a petition from Luther's litany has lately found its way into the American edition of the Prayer Book—"That it may please thee to send forth labourers into thy harvest." And it is much more interesting to see in the far-off days of St. Chrysostom the first suggestion of all the litanies. The unorthodox Arians naturally were not permitted to use the churches in Constantinople; so they held their services outdoors. On Saturday night they would gather in the public squares and spend a large part of the night in singing. Then at dawn on Sunday morning they would march through the city and out to their places of worship outside the city gates, singing antiphonally all the way. St. Chrysostom noted how attractive was this nightly outdoor worship of the Arians, and he resolved to outrival its popularity. So he introduced similar nightly processions of singing for the

orthodox Christians. And the Empress Eudoxia helped him to make these processions splendid; in particular by the gift of silver processional crosses, illuminated by tapers attached to them. But after a time this rivalry in processions led to disorders on the street, and then the emperor suppressed them all.

The English Litany's most conspicuous borrowing from the ancient liturgy of St. Chrysostom is the prayer which bears his name. Originally this prayer opened the service of the Holy Communion. But in those earlier days the Communion service had usually been preceded by a litany. So when Cranmer placed this prayer at the end of the new Litany, its position, though slightly novel, was not changed essentially. And a few years later it was also to be placed at the close of the Morning and the Evening Prayer. This prayer of St. Chrysostom is so familiar today that perhaps we may pause here a moment to glance at the story of its supposed author.

Chrysostom, or Golden Mouth, was the name given to John, Bishop of Constanti-

nople, because of his eloquence. For in addition to an extraordinary command of language, we are told that he had "the happy art of engaging the passions in the service of virtue; and of exposing the folly, as well as the turpitude, of vice, almost with the truth and spirit of a dramatic representation." When only twenty years old he had already won success as a lawyer; yet a few years later he retired to a hermit life in the wilderness. His health broke down, however, under this experience, and he returned to Antioch. Then he was ordained a priest. And he was so earnest in his work, and his people in consequence became so fond of their pastor, that when he was appointed Patriarch of Constantinople it was necessary to carry him away secretly.

As bishop he was not content merely to thunder from the pulpit of St. Sophia against the sins of the common people. He especially turned his attention to the higher clergy and government officials, determined to reform their too often dissolute lives. This attack on the leaders of both Church and State—even the empress did not escape—raised up for him a host of enemies, and hatred against

him grew and spread until there were attempts to kill him. Then his enemies persuaded the emperor Arcadius to banish him, and for three years thereafter he lived in the Taurus mountains. Here he found peace from his enemies, though with much and bitter physical suffering. But venomous hate still pursued him, till finally he was sentenced to be carried far away, to the shores of the Euxine Sea. At the same time his guards were told to exhaust his strength on the way by cruel treatment, and only too faithfully they obeyed their orders. After three months of such travel it was found one day that the bishop was dying. He was allowed to turn back to a church which he had lately passed. There he asked for white garments, and fitly clad in white raiment he received the Holy Communion. He offered a last prayer; added his usual thanksgiving, "Glory to God for all things"; and sealed it with "Amen." Finally, as an ancient writer tells us, "He stretched out his feet, which had run beauteously for the salvation of the penitent and the rebuke of habitual sinners," and so he died.

Yet Chrysostom, the Golden Mouth, was

not to be forgotten, and thirty years afterward his remains were brought back to Constantinople. Gibbon tells us that "the Emperor Theodosius advanced to meet them as far as Chalcedon, and falling prostrate on the coffin, implored, in the name of his guilty parents, Arcadius and Eudoxia, the forgiveness of the injured saint."

The English Litany was published in 1544, the only part of the Prayer Book to appear in English during the reign of Henry VIII. No form of service so complete and rich and beautiful had ever before been put into the hands of the English people. If Cranmer had never done anything more, this achievement alone would have been enough to make his name immortal. Its whole composition is conceived on a plane high above that of any service then in use. The pettiness of superstition had been swept away. For the moment, to be sure, there was still left one collective petition to the Virgin Mary and other principal saints. This was to disappear, however, in a second edition; and meanwhile it only reminds us that literary surgery could not be

too radical in that day, since the period was one of transition.

At the same time the influence of the newly translated Bible on this service is very evident. We feel it in the spirit of the whole Litany, and it finds definite expression in two novel petitions: "That it may please thee to illuminate all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, with true knowledge and understanding of thy Word; and that both by their preaching and living they may set it forth, and show it accordingly"; and ". . . that it may please thee to give to all thy people increase of grace to hear meekly thy Word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit." Inevitably we are reminded of what Cranmer had declared explicitly—as indeed the reformers generally had believed—that if only the people once had the Bible in English, all needful reform of the services would follow in due course.

It was expressly stated that the Litany had been published in English "because not understanding the prayers and suffrages formerly used caused that the people came but slackly to the Processions." But the same

neglect threatened all the prayers, and for the same reason. For as the committee on further translation now declared: "The service in the Church of England, these many years, hath been read in Latin to the people, which they understood not; so that they have heard with their ears only; and their hearts, spirit, and mind have not been edified thereby."

Chapter VII

IN A SINGLE VOLUME

HE committee on the translation of the services, with Archbishop Cranmer as chairman, had been studying the possibilities of their undertaking for a long time past, and they pursued it now with devotion and great skill. They finished their task in 1549, when for the first time all the services were brought together in one volume and printed in English. The boy king, Edward, only son of Henry VIII, was on the throne, and so this book is known today as the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. The writers had "clothed it in English," says Macaulay, "the beauty of which has rarely been equalled and never surpassed, even in the best age of literary excellence. . . . The essential qualities of devotion and eloquence, conciseness, majestic simplicity, pathetic earnestness and sup-

plication, sobered by profound reverence, are common between the translations and the originals; but in the subordinate graces of diction the originals must be allowed to be far inferior to the translations."

For, Macaulay also calls to our attention, the Latin of Cranmer's time was sinking into barbarism, while the combination of Anglo-Saxon and Norman French had produced a dialect superior to either alone. "The Latin of the Roman Catholic services, therefore, is Latin in the last stage of decay. The English of our services is English in all the vigor and suppleness of youth." Or, changing the figure, we may say that the English language then was fresh and plastic, and Cranmer's accomplished hand moulded it into forms of exquisite and lasting beauty. The collects, in particular, he made the most perfect examples of phrasing and diction to be found in the whole range of English literature.

Of the collects original with Cranmer let us quote here two. The first reflects most vividly his love for and championship of the English Bible: "Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for

our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ." And then this one more, because it suggests that the poor, begging worship of saints has been done away, and all devotion is now lifted to a higher plane: "O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord; Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which thou hast prepared for those who unfeignedly love thee."

Yet this monumental volume was not to stand unchallenged. During many years afterward, both in Church and State, we are to witness an increasingly determined struggle between those ever antagonistic principles, conservatism and radicalism. Society, in every department, in the new light of the

time, was making extraordinary efforts at readjustment. Of course the Book of Common Prayer, on the battle-ground of popular interests, became involved in the conflict.

So only three years pass before we see the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI published. As we open this volume, we notice at once that the names of the daily services have been prosaically changed from Matins and Evensong to Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, and before each service a prefatory section has been placed. In 1549 each service began with the Lord's Prayer; in 1552 it began, as today, with sentences, exhortation, confession, and absolution. This change is a sign of the times. For "there can be little doubt that this opportunity for making public acknowledgment of sin, and hearing the declaration of God's willingness to forgive, was meant to counterbalance the removal from the book of all reference, save in one instance, to private confession and absolution."

When we turn on into the heart of the book, to the service of Holy Communion, we find further modification. The Ten Command-

ments have been inserted; the word "table" has been substituted for the word "altar"; and the prayer for Christ's Church is now to be offered only for those "militant here in earth," all supplications for those who have passed on before us having been deleted. In the latest American edition, it should be parenthetically stated here, the last-mentioned change has happily been corrected. But at the time, these mutations in both parts of the book showed plainly which way the wind had been blowing. The Puritan party had evidently been winning considerable success. Finally, in the central feature of the Communion service, the prayer of consecration, we see the effect of reaction at its worst. For this solemn prayer was broken into pieces and the pieces were misplaced. And in this unfortunate condition it has remained in the services of the Church of England to the present day.

The boy king Edward soon faded away, and he was only fifteen years old when death relieved him of the burdens of royalty. Then his sister, Bloody Mary, succeeded him. At heart she was not English, but Spanish, and

the experiences of her early years had soured and embittered her. So she turned at once against the people entrusted to her charge, and began putting them to death. Archbishop Cranmer, her father's best friend, was one of her three hundred victims. It is enough to say here, however, that as in the general history of civilization, so in the development of the Book of Common Prayer, the four years of Mary's reign are simply a black hiatus.

In 1558, hailed with a burst of joy, Elizabeth mounted the English throne. Then in her twenty-fifth year, she was to hold the scepter for forty-five years, and to make the Elizabethan Age one of the most brilliant periods in English history. Of fine and striking appearance physically, her character was a combination of inheritance from both father and mother. On the surface frivolous, flirtatious, and luxury loving, under that surface she had her father's will of steel. She was as keen-eyed as he, too, in her judgment of men, and no shrewder hand ever played the game of politics.

The country had been almost ruined by

her sister Mary's reign, and plunged deep into difficulties both financial and political. To restore public confidence, to make the country strong and prosperous, and the people happy, this was her task. And she accepted the challenge. But to win and hold her people's trust she must walk with them; that is, with the great majority of them. The extreme parties on either hand were both eager for the new queen's favor; but she saw clearly that she could be no partisan ruler. If she cast her lot with either side she would certainly fail, and perhaps would lose her throne. She dared not even marry, because this step would inevitably ally her with one or the other camp of the extremists. For her the middle way was not only the safest course; it was the only one possible. This fact she understood from the first, and she made her resolve and shaped her plans accordingly.

Thus compromise and combination became the key words of policy in all things now; as in affairs of state, so also in matters ecclesiastical. During Queen Mary's reign the Book of Common Prayer, of course, had been pro-

scribed, outlawed; now Queen Elizabeth called it into use again. At the same time, very naturally, it once more passed under review and was revised. This time, however, the revision was very slight. In the edition of 1549, in the service of Holy Communion, the words of administration were these at the delivery of the bread—"The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life"; and at the delivery of the wine—"The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." In the edition of 1552, by the influence of reaction, those earlier sentences were supplanted by these words: "Take and eat this, in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving"; and "Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful." Now, in the edition made during Queen Elizabeth's reign, these two sets of forms were happily combined, and this double form has been in use ever since.

Such was the Prayer Book of 1559. It is

notable for one curious fact. Abundant testimony assures us that Pope Pius IV offered to give this book his official approval, on the sole condition that the queen, for her part, would acknowledge his supremacy. But the Pope at once discovered that Elizabeth was a true daughter of Henry VIII, and was nowise minded to be any man's puppet. And later, by Pius V, she was excommunicated.

At Elizabeth's death in 1603, Mary Stuart's son, James VI of Scotland, came to the throne as James I of England. In outward appearance an ungainly buffoon, in character he was a strange mixture. He was bright and more or less of a scholar, but at the same time narrow and mean and stubborn; and the description well fitted him, "the wisest fool in Christendom." Because he had been brought up among the Scotch Presbyterians, the Puritan party in the English Church hoped to find in him a helpful sympathizer. Therefore they promptly presented him with a petition filled with a long enumeration of their objections to the Book of Common Prayer. Of the many practices which they wished abolished, here are a few

examples: the use of the sign of the cross in baptism and of the ring in marriage, bowing at the name of Jesus, confirmation, and kneeling at the Holy Communion. Music in the services, they said, must be reduced to a minimum, and the clergy must be permitted to conduct services without a surplice.

If the petitioners had been a little more modest in their demands they might have been successful. As it was, they asked for so much that they obtained almost nothing. They were still obliged to see their children signed with the sign of the cross in baptism, to kneel at the Holy Communion, and to behold the hated surplice worn by the clergy. In fine, they were left to groan, as they said, under that "common burden of human rites and ceremonies" of which they had so bitterly complained.

A generation later, however, when they came into power under Cromwell and the Long Parliament, the Puritans had their revenge. Once more, as by Bloody Mary, the Book of Common Prayer was outlawed. In 1645 Parliament forbade all use of it, either in public or in private. In its place was put

forward a compilation of rules entitled "The Directory for the Public Worship of God in the Three Kingdoms." All copies of the Prayer Book must be given up. Any person found in possession of one was subject to fines for the first and second offences, and to a year of imprisonment for a third offence. Now, to quote Macaulay once more: "It was a crime in a child, to read by the bedside of a sick parent one of those beautiful collects which had soothed the griefs of forty generations of Christians." More than this, if that sick parent died he or she must be buried like a dog. For the use of the burial service, like that of all the other services, and been prohibited; and the Directory ordered—"When any person departeth this life, let the dead body be . . . immediately interred, without ceremony."

At the same time, thousands of faithful clergymen were driven from their posts, many churches and valuable works of art were savagely defaced, and Parliament voted that all pictures in the royal galleries which contained representations of Jesus or His mother should be burned. Under Bloody

Mary we saw what bigotry could be, at one extreme; now we behold its ugly face again, at the other extreme.

Christian lovingkindness, indeed, was very little in evidence in those days, nor would be, for many years to come, on either side or in any quarter. Let any who like to talk of "the good old times" remember this fact. The gain in physical comfort of late years has been astonishing. What we do not so easily appreciate is the accompanying spiritual advance. For society has also achieved notable progress in broad-mindedness and Christian charity. It is true that much still remains to be accomplished; but just here is our own opportunity. Let us help the good work forward. Said a certain man to his friend, "This is a wretched old world; I could make a better one myself." "Jim," replied the other, "that is exactly what you and I are here for—to make a better world."

When Archbishop Laud and King Charles I had both been beheaded, it seemed that the Church of England had died with them, and of course the Prayer Book too. After a time,

however, the people grew tired of Cromwell and martial law and all the barbarity of the puritan regime. Then Charles' son, who had run away to save his life, came home again, as Charles II. The radicals met him on his way, with a petition not to allow the restoration of the Prayer Book. Receiving no satisfaction, however, they soon afterward asked the king to summon a conference to discuss the revision of the book. This he agreed to do. And the result was a conference which met in London, at the Savoy Palace—an old palace of the Savoy ambassadors—on April 15, 1661. Twelve bishops, with nine coadjutors, represented the Church of England; and the opposing party sent twelve of their chief divines, likewise with nine assistants.

The criticisms which the Puritans brought up before King James had been numerous enough, but those now presented were still more numerous. As viewed generally today, they appear trivial and captious. In fine, they simply betray a profound dislike for the whole idea of the Book of Common Prayer. Wholesale objection was made to giving the congregation so much part in the service. So

it was asked that all responses, including the antiphonal reading of the Psalms, should be suppressed, as only creating "a confused murmur." Particularly the Puritans inveighed on this ground against the Litany, and wanted it transformed into one long prayer. So again they asked that the Confession in the Communion service should not be said by minister and people together, but only by the minister. As for the Confession in the daily services, they wished this made more detailed and explicit. To the matchless beauty of the collects they were quite insensible, and complained that these were too short. As for lesser objections, these threatened to run on indefinitely.

In the midst of the Conference one man's act stands out, not more conspicuous than it is suggestive. This man was Baxter, the famous author of "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," and on the side of the Puritans the controlling spirit in this debate. It has been said of him that he was "absolutely without an equal in guilelessness and personal piety"; but as this incident shows, he had far more simplicity than wisdom. It occurred to him

that he might avert all further discussion of the Prayer Book by simply writing a new and better one himself. So he left the Conference, and shut himself up in his study, and devoted himself to this undertaking. In his own words, "I departed from them, and came among them no more till I had finished my task, which was a fortnight's time." Then he brought his work and presented it to the Conference. This volume, entirely of his own composition, and the product of only two weeks' labor, he proposed to substitute for a book into which had been gathered the wisdom and learning and piety of thirty generations. By this amazing folly Baxter had done his worst to wreck the cause of his party. The Conference continued its discussions for some time longer, but they only proved more and more wearisome, and came at length to a fruitless close.

Then a special commission of eight men undertook the actual work of revision. Cosin, Bishop of Durham, a man of great liturgical learning, was the president of the commission, and about nine-tenths of the resulting alterations were due to his suggestions. In

all, six hundred changes were made; yet hardly a half-dozen were of any considerable importance. The greatest additions, as estimated only by the space occupied, were the Office for the Baptism of Adults and the Forms of Prayer to Be Used at Sea. The former service was particularly needed then, because under the Commonwealth thousands of men and women had grown up unbaptized. Also it was expected to be useful for baptizing "natives in the plantations and other converts." The special forms for use at sea the latest American revision has omitted.

Other notable additions made at that time were the Prayer for All Conditions of Men, and the General Thanksgiving. Of the former it is curious to note that in its original form it probably was much longer, having been intended as a substitute for the Litany, in deference to the Puritans' dislike for that service. As another change of importance, the Sentences, Epistles, and Gospels were now ordered to be printed as in the new "Authorized Version of the Bible" of 1611, our King James Version. All other selections of Scripture were left untouched, as taken from

Cranmer's, or the Great Bible, of 1540, a conservatism which was particularly fortunate in the case of the Psalter, because the older version, though less accurate, is so much more musical. Finally, one more addition to be noted is the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for the Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany. The collect, probably from the pen of Bishop Cosin, is so very beautiful that we may be pardoned for quoting it here: "O God, whose blessed Son was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life; Grant us, we beseech thee, that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as he is pure; that, when he shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto him in his eternal and glorious kingdom."

So closed the work of the Conference. In the next year, 1662, this new edition of the Prayer Book received the official approval of the king. And ever since, for more than two hundred and fifty years, this has been the book of forms of public worship used by the Church of England.

We have noted already what was the spirit in general of that earlier time; and if, in particular, the temper of that Prayer Book conference was not over-kindly, could we reasonably expect it to be? The characters of the past can only be judged fairly by the standards of the time in which they lived. The men on the conservative side of that debate had fresh in their memories their severe sufferings under the Long Parliament. Now, once more, they had in their hands their long exiled Prayer Book. If the Puritan party still disapproved of the book, let them first write down all their objections, and then duly support them. This proposition, generally considered, must seem fair, even today. And if the conservative members of the conference were not over-conciliatory, as we must sincerely regret; on the other hand, quite as unquestionably, their opponents did not invite conciliation. As Dean Swift said afterward, "What imports it how large a gate you open, if there be always left a number who place a pride and a merit in refusing to enter?"

The truth is, the contest over the Prayer

Book in that century was a battle to the death. For it was only one aspect of a broad struggle, in which no quarter was expected by either side. What the Puritans asked in this case was what they demanded in religious matters generally, and this was not mere religious toleration. Rather, in plain language, they wanted to do as they liked—and, moreover, to compel their neighbors to do it too. It was one of the most famous of the Puritans, Cotton Mather, who declared, "Religious toleration is a doctrine of devils." But so all men thought in his day. And so they continued to think, too, until comparatively lately.

One consideration alone, however, concerns us just here: that the hard temper of that elder day had a freezing and crystallizing effect on the Book of Common Prayer. It created in men's minds an impression akin to belief in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. As so many have thought of the English translation of the Scriptures, that its very punctuation points were inspired, so others have thought of the 1661 edition of the Prayer Book, that it was an inspired en-

tity, which could not be modified without sacrilege. It is this feeling which has kept the book virtually unchanged in England for eight generations, and has made its reëditing extremely difficult, even today.

Chapter VIII

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER IN AMERICA

HE most picturesque and the most important event in all the long reign of Queen Elizabeth was the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Philip the Second, King of Spain, hatched once more in his narrow head the old familiar dream of world dominion, and the first step to this achievement must be the conquest of England. Three years he gave to preparation. One hundred and fifty great ships he built on the river Tagus, and fitted and provisioned them well for their daring voyage.

It was a summer day of July, 1588, when the Spanish fleet, in the form of a broad crescent, came sailing up the English Channel. Clumsy craft they were, and their towering white sails, spread to the wind, were covered

with tall crosses and with figures of angels. They were carrying eight thousand sailors, twenty thousand soldiers, and twenty-five hundred cannon. Hundreds of priests and monks were on board also, commissioned to undo the work of the English Reformation. And last but not least, there was abundance of whips and chains and thumbscrews. For as the Spaniards had been using these Christian instruments of conversion in the Netherlands, so now they proposed to use them in England.

But England was ready. The night before the arrival of the fleet great beacon fires had flashed from hill to hill the news of its coming. And from lip to lip, and from town to town, the cry passed on—"The Armada! The Armada!"—till all the land had caught the message. Now on shore the well-trying army was waiting, and on the water England's "sea dogs." These latter in truth were pirates, but they were heroes too. Their little vessels were hardly half equal to those of the Spaniards, either in size or numbers, but they were expert seamen and indomitable fighters.

All one week, like terriers against mastiffs, they worried the foe. Then, one night, one of their bravest, Sir Francis Drake, set eight fireships all adrift. Blazing up against the darkness, these went sailing in among the Spanish galleons, and terror stricken, the Spaniards put out to sea. One day more the "sea dogs" fought them, and then, under cover of the night, the enemy turned and fled. Up around the Irish coast, the only way left open to them, they sailed into the teeth of the northern gales. There the storm winds strewn the shores with wrecks and the waves with corpses. And only fifty ships, filled with pestilence and death, crept sadly back at last into the harbor of Corunna.

But what makes this historic event so extraordinarily memorable is the twofold fact that it was the beginning of the far-spread British Empire, and practically the beginning of America. Even in the time of the Venerable Bede, so he tells us, the British sailors were accustomed to visit Iceland. And in the fifteenth century English explorers touched the American shores several times. Yet these visits showed no concrete results,

while as regards the Book of Common Prayer there is no definite record of its use in America till it was carried there by the British "sea dogs."

In May, 1578, ten years before he helped to defeat the Armada, Sir Martin Frobisher, with "fifteen sayle of good ships," set out for America. It was his third voyage and a hard one. None but a "sea dog" would have braved it. To illustrate one of his experiences: Those little vessels passed through a field of icebergs on their way, and an iceberg toppled over on one of them and sank it. And when their voyage was finished, these men found themselves far at the north, on the barren shore of Hudson Bay. Here their chaplain, "Maister Wolfall, on Winter's Fornace, preached a godly sermon; which being ended, he celebrated also a Communion upon the land; at the partaking whereof was the Captain of the *Anne Frances*, and many other Gentlemen and Souldiers, Mariners and Miners with him. The celebration of the divine mystery was the first signe, seale and confirmation of Christ's name,

death and passion ever knowen in these quarters."

The next year Sir Francis Drake, the first Englishman to do it, made his famous voyage around the world. On this voyage he touched the opposite side of America, and landed on the shore of California. On the highest elevation in Golden Gate Park, at San Francisco, stands today a large Celtic cross—the Prayer Book Cross—to commemorate Drake's visit. And if one stands beside this cross, and looks far down the coast to Drake's Bay, there he can see the very point where it is thought the company of the "sea dog" landed. They stayed five weeks, from June 17th to July 23; and during their stay their chaplain, the Reverend Francis Fletcher, again with use of the Prayer Book, held services for them. These were the first Christian services on the western shore of America.

Eight summers later, in 1587, a company of English people arrived on the coast of North Carolina. Famous Sir Walter Raleigh had sent them out. They landed on Roanoke Island and made a camp in the woods. And here again we see the Book of Common

Prayer come into use. For the very next Sunday, August 13th, under the forest trees, a red Indian named Manteo was baptized. Captured and carried to England as a specimen of the American natives, there he had been converted to Christianity. The next Friday a little granddaughter was born to the governor, and the following Sunday she too was baptized—the first white child baptized in America. That part of the country had been named Virginia, for the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth, and so this baby girl was given the name Virginia—Virginia Dare. Not long afterward this whole colony disappeared, and what became of the people has never been discovered.

Now let twenty years fly past, and we shall see larger use for the Book of Common Prayer. It was a sunny day in May, 1607, and on the bank of a broad river in what is now Virginia a little Indian girl was playing with her wooden doll. A white feather in her black hair showed that she was a princess, for she was the daughter of the great chief, Powhatan. Her real name was Matoaka, but her father had given her a pet name. He

called her Pocahontas, "Little Rogue." And as Pocahontas, "Little Rogue," she will always be known in history.

That day, as Pocahontas was playing with her ugly wooden doll, a little playmate came running up to her. "Oh! Oh!" he cried; and told her he had just seen an enormous bird with great white wings, swimming up the river. Pocahontas ran off to tell her father, and he and his neighbors hurried to the river. And there, for the first time, they saw the sails of the white man's ships.

There were three tiny vessels, the *Susan Constant*, the *Godspeed*, and the *Discovery*, and together they carried a company of one hundred men. These had meant to join Raleigh's colony, but on their four months' voyage they had lost their way, and finally a storm had driven them into what is now Hampton Roads. Then they sailed up the stream which they afterward named for their king, the James River. They came to a spot which looked to them inviting, and here they tied their little ships to trees on the bank. (Imagine tying a great modern transatlantic to a tree on a river bank!) Here too they

determined to make their new home, and they named the place Jamestown. This was the first permanent English settlement in America.

As soon as these pioneers had all got ashore, they and their chaplain, the Reverend Robert Hunt, knelt down on the river bank; and together they prayed some of the familiar prayers of the Prayer Book, and thanked God for bringing them safely across the stormy ocean. Next day they built a rustic fort, of "the boughs of trees, caste together in the forme of a halfe moon," and perched a diminutive cannon on each end of it. And then, after thus providing for their safety, they built a church. As one of them, Captain John Smith, describes it, this was simply a big tent. He says, "I well remember, we did hang an awning, which is an old saile, to three or four trees, to shadow us from the sunne. Our walls were rales of wood, our seats unhewn trees, our pulpit a bar of wood nailed to two neighboring trees." To help also in holding up the sail, poles were placed here and there among the trees. So it is that Chaplain Hunt calls the church "a pen of poles."

Here among the forest trees, not only every Sunday, but every morning and every afternoon, the people had public worship. Even when away from the camp, exploring the woods, they still had daily prayers together, to the astonishment of the Indians. "Our daily order," says Captain Smith, "was to have prayer with a Psalme; at which solemnitie the poore salvages wondered." So "the mother Christian town of America" was indeed founded on the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer.

After a time the colonists built a more substantial church. They said of it truly that it was "a homely thing, like a barn." Its walls were of unhewn logs. Across these walls rough poles were laid for rafters, and finally the roof was made of brush and sods. Then gradually this log church was furnished. It had a bell, some say two, hung on a neighboring tree. Inside there was a Communion table of black walnut, and there were pews of cedar, while a large block of wood was hollowed out to serve as a font. The windows had no stained glass, nor even ordinary glass, but simply wooden shutters. On Sunday, how-

ever, this little church must have been truly beautiful, for it was adorned with wild flowers, while the fifty soldiers of the governor's bodyguard, in their "faire red cloakes," made it still brighter with their gay colors.

In this church, in 1611—the year of the publication of the "Authorized Version" of the Bible—Pocahontas was baptized and given the name Rebecca. Three years afterward, on April 5, 1614, she was married to an Englishman; a widower named John Rolfe. Her aged uncle, Apahisco, with her father's consent, led her to the altar; two of her brothers also were present; and the Reverend Richard Buck read the marriage service of the Book of Common Prayer. Two years later, Rolfe carried his lovely bride to visit England. Sad to tell, however, on her way back to America, Pocahontas died at Gravesend. There today, in St. George's Church, are two windows to her memory, and on the church register we find this record: "1617, May 2, Rebecca Rrolf, wiff of Thomas (a mistake?) Rrolf., gent., a Virginia Lady borne, was buried in the Chaun-

cell." A little son survived her, and afterward he crossed the ocean, to make his home in his mother's own Virginia. And today many Americans proudly claim descent from the beautiful Indian princess.

One more church the Jamestown erected, this time a fairly large one, built of bricks brought from England. Not very long afterward, however, the colonists moved to another location, a few miles away. Then in its loneliness the church gradually fell into ruin, till at last only its great square tower was left. But lately a replica of the old church has been built onto the tower, and there by the river bank it stands today, as a monument to the past.

The Prayer Book so far used in America, of course, was that of Queen Elizabeth's day, the edition of 1559. Now we will drop our eyes down across the space of more than a century, and observe some new experiences for the ancient book.

So long as the English colonists in America remained colonists, and members of the English Church, they could use without diffi-

culty the same services to which they had been accustomed in England. But on July 4, 1776, the American colonies declared themselves independent. Now American lovers of the Book of Common Prayer found themselves in an uncomfortable position. They could no longer pray for King George, as his loyal subjects; some other things too, in the Prayer Book, were now awkward to use. What was to be done? Eventually, the book must evidently be revised once more, and adapted to the new conditions. For a time there was merely recourse, in the various parish churches, to the "rubric of common-sense."

The first attempt at reëditing was made in 1785, and the resulting volume has since been known as the Proposed Book. It effected too many changes from the English book to be satisfactory, and therefore was never adopted, but proved simply an instructive experiment.

The first properly and successfully revised American edition of the Book of Common Prayer appeared in 1789. At three points we find it indebted to the Proposed Book.

The preface is almost entirely taken from that work. So also were found there two sentences of the Morning Prayer, "The Lord is in his holy temple" and "From the rising of the sun." And particularly, that book furnished a special form of service for Thanksgiving Day—a form since dropped.

One conspicuous change from the English book, which made the English bishops cry out in protest, was the omission of the Athanasian Creed. This action was due to that feeling of rebellion which has been found in countless hearts. For it most certainly is not true that "except every one do keep it (the Catholic Faith) whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." There is room for much doubt on that point. And judgment on any such matter rests with God only; it is not for man to make pronouncement. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" In any case, only the positive and simple statement of the faith itself, without any negative statement, or consideration of possible negative action, has any proper place in a creed. The Athanasian Creed, like the Thirty-nine Articles, was

a product of its time and needed only at that time.

In like manner, although its prayers were retained, the Communion Service was dropped, because the spirit of this service is that of the Old Covenant, and not that of the Gospel. On the other hand, a most unfortunate omission was that of the Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis. We must be thankful that this omission was only temporary, however, and that both beautiful hymns have since been restored to their proper place.

The greatest gain in this book is in the service of Holy Communion. We saw how sadly this service was mangled in 1552. Now this injury was repaired. Let us note how this happened.

When Dr. Samuel Seabury went to England, and asked consecration to the episcopate at the hands of the English bishops, they felt obliged to refuse, particularly because, from their point of view, he was a rebel, refusing to swear allegiance to the king. He waited a year in England, and then he went to Scotland. There he found a warm welcome. And in the private chapel in the

house of Bishop John Skinner, in Aberdeen, Dr. Seabury was consecrated bishop, by three Scottish bishops, on November 17, 1784. These asked Bishop Seabury to try to have the Scotch Communion Office adopted in the American edition of the Prayer Book. This he promised to do. And when he told his brethren in America of this desire of his Scottish consecrators they readily agreed to it. So it is that the Communion Service as found in the American book is essentially the same as in the Scottish liturgy, which in turn is substantially identical with that of the Prayer Book of 1549.

Of course the prayers for those in civil authority were remodelled for the American book. Also alterations were made in the Marriage Service and the Burial Office, and a few words and expressions were modernized. Such were the most essential changes in the first American edition of the Book of Common Prayer, in 1779. This volume was to serve for a hundred years. Then there was to be a new reëditing.

In 1870 the Reverend Dr. William Reed

Huntington put forth his famous proposition known today as the Quadrilateral, suggesting four conditions on which might be based the corporate unity of Christendom. It was the vision of a poet in the mind of a statesman. To refresh our memory, these were the points suggested, as expressed in the brief, original statement of belief:

1. The Holy Scriptures, as the Word of God.
2. The Primitive Creeds, as the Rule of Faith.
3. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ himself.
4. The Episcopate, as the center or keystone of governmental unity.

Following closely on this vision, and tributary to it, the seer cherished another dream, more nearly possible of realization. He thought of the Book of Common Prayer in its true character, as the priceless inheritance of all English speaking people. And with this thought in mind, he pictured the book made more elastic, richer, and every way more thoroughly adapted to the uses of modern life. So he would have it again truly im-

proved; with no loss of treasure from the past, yet now made ready for an inestimable, fresh opportunity.

Dr. Huntington made his first move at the Episcopal General Convention of 1877. He introduced a resolution calling for the election of a joint committee of seven bishops, seven presbyters, and seven laymen, to consider generally the possibility of Prayer Book revision. But the time was not yet ripe. Some minor changes were made, but the resolution was voted down.

The seer, however, was not discouraged. At the next meeting of General Convention, in Boston, in 1880, he again brought forward his resolution. This time it was adopted, and the committee was constituted; the Right Reverend John Williams, Bishop of Connecticut, its chairman, and Dr. Huntington its secretary. To General Convention, meeting in Philadelphia in 1883, the committee made its report, accompanying it with the so-called Book Annexed, which showed the Prayer Book as it would appear if all the changes proposed were adopted. In defence of this report in the House of Deputies,

Dr. Huntington took the floor. And from all sides, day after day, questions and criticisms were turned upon him, while with clear thought and perfect command of the situation; and with quick, keen word and unfailing courtesy the champion stood there and answered the critics. It was a scene to be remembered. Coming out one evening, after listening to that debate, a visitor remarked to a friend at his side, "There has been nothing heard like that since the days of Daniel Webster and Rufus Choate."

The work so begun was finished in 1892. And what was the result? The Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis were recovered, and the entirety of the Benedictus. Also Collects, Epistles, and Gospels were provided for a first Communion on Christmas Day and on Easter Day and for the festival of the Transfiguration. As other additions we note a Penitential Office, several new special prayers, and new sentences at the opening of Morning and Evening Prayer and in the Communion Service. These were the principal concrete improvements won by this revision. When they are compared with the immense amount

of labor expended on the undertaking, one is reminded of the fable of the mountain and the mouse. Yet if the tangible result was small, it certainly was good. And the main achievement lay in the fact that once more it had been proved that the Prayer Book can be remodelled from time to time, as altered conditions call for change.

Now, a generation later, still further revision has resulted in the American edition of 1928. In this publication we have the richest and finest form of the Book of Common Prayer yet accomplished. As a compendium of devotion and also as a masterpiece of literature, it challenges today the heart and the brain of every thoughtful man and woman who speaks the English language. If contemporary effort at revision in England has for the moment failed, we will hope that later it also may be carried to success.

So may this wonderful book continually grow in richness and beauty. And so too may the appreciation and the love of it spread and increase, more and more, as the generations pass. For, as Dr. Huntington truly says of

“many, many words of the Common Prayer”:
“They touch that which is most catholic in us, that which strongly links us to our kind. For there is that in some of the Collects which, as it has lasted since the days when Roman emperors were sitting on their thrones, so will it last while man continues what he is, a praying creature.”

Chapter IX

THE SERVICE OF FAREWELL

THE solemn service of farewell, in the Book of Common Prayer, the noble office for the burial of the so-called dead, knows no rival in its sublime and awful beauty. And no review of the Prayer Book could seem complete which left it without mention.

“I AM!” So sounds its great opening chord. Immediately the fleeting interests of today are swept aside. We are in eternity; we are standing in the presence chamber of the Almighty.

“I AM!” It is the ineffable Name of God. We remember Jesus’ declaration to the listening crowd, in the court of the temple at Jerusalem—“Before Abraham was, I AM!” At once they caught up stones, to stone Him, because He had claimed God’s Name as His own, and to their understanding He had com-

mitted blasphemy. And so again that night in Gethsemane, at the hour of His arrest. To the officers and officials, with their swords and their torches, He says—"Whom seek ye?" They answer Him—"Jesus of Nazareth." And He replies—"I AM!" At once they stagger backward, and fall on their faces on the ground.

And now He meets us today at the side of the yawning grave. As with that group of mourners—His friends—at the grave of Lazarus, so He stands in our midst too. Our eyes are blinded with tears. Our loved one has passed beyond our sight; the future is all unknown. But once more we hear the declaration—so magnificent in its assurance, so blessed in its comfort—"I AM!" "I AM the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." For such an one is walking hourly with the great "I AM." He has been regenerated by omnipotence. There beats in his heart, there runs in the veins of his soul that power which neither

death nor hell can defeat, "the power of an endless life."

"I know that my Redeemer liveth." In primitive ages legal provisions were scarce and crude. So it was that a kinsman might act for the aggrieved party, in the redemption of property or as an avenger of homicide. So Job, cruelly misjudged by his neighbors, rests his cause in the hands of God. He chooses Jehovah to be his vindicator. Though there be nothing for him in this world but pain and bereavement and slander, yet even so his faith in God is unshaken. Though even his body be taken from him, God will be close beside him still. In that divine guardianship he will be perfectly safe. No enemy, not even death itself, can harm him. And so we also know, in our generation, "that to them that love God all things work together for good." And when today's schooling is finished, and the crippling, blinding flesh is left behind, we too shall see God. And we shall find Him no stranger, but our own Father.

And as for those whom we have loved, and lost a while—"The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no

torment touch them." Yes, even if sometimes we dare not call them righteous, because they have gone out from this world stained with sin, still they are His children. And we know that He will do for them incomparably better than we can ask or think.

"They cannot be where God is not,
On any sea or shore.
What'er betides, Thy love abides,
Our God forevermore."

"We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." So in the one mighty chord of divine assurance is struck the lower note, of kindest warning.

When famous Saladin was borne out to burial, a soldier walked before the bier, while on the head of his spear, held high aloft, he carried a winding sheet. And as he marched on through the watching crowds, he cried aloud—"Behold! Behold! This is all that is left to him today of the conquests of great Saladin." In the same spirit Alexander, conqueror of the world, gave order for his own burial. He directed that when his body should be carried on its last journey, his hands should be left upturned, outside the shroud,

that all men might see that they were empty.

It is no expression of thoughtless sentimentality, therefore, when our Brother reminds us—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." He who invests all his happiness in transitory, material things is sure of disappointment. But the heaven which neither decay nor thief can enter is not a realm that is today beyond our reach. Rather it is the ever-present world of the heart and the soul, continually open to us all. And meantime also, in life's experience, both the giving and the taking away are the deed of Infinite Wisdom.

At this point in the service, in the latest American edition of the Prayer Book, are found six psalms, to be used at the discretion of the officiant. The various authors approach their theme from different angles; yet their essential message is in all cases the same. All bid to unhesitating trust in our Father's unfailing love.

The last and most exquisitely beautiful of these ancient hymns is the "De Profundis." We listen to it perforce with bowed head,

for we are standing before that innermost room of a human life which few but the Omniscient are ever allowed to enter. The singer shows us, by implication, what he has found in his own heart—sin, failure, shame—all the disaster of human weakness. Out of that deep, he tells us, he has called to the Everlasting Mercy, and God has heard him. So it is that now he beseeches all his fellow men: “O Israel, trust in the LORD, for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.”

In the whole Bible library there are few passages so eloquent as that which forms the regular Lesson of the Burial Office, and when we consider the circumstances of its composition it becomes tenfold impressive.

The author is St. Paul. He is writing from Ephesus, “the Marseilles of the Aegean.” Here was one of the most brilliant cities of the Roman empire. From her eastern gates, highroads ran out to the teeming markets of the Orient; and the harbor on her western side was thronged with merchant vessels and

Roman warships. On her streets and wharves was heard, every day, the roaring traffic of a busy commerce, while that symbol of her pride, the famous temple of Diana, rose high above the city, to gleam like a star far out at sea.

The Apostle's letter is addressed to the Christians of Corinth, across the blue Aegean, opposite. Here was another great commercial port. Standing on the isthmus of Greece, she had a harbor on either hand; and in these two harbors also rode the shipping of the world. The city was rich, beautiful, and gay. And the careless luxury of her pleasure-loving people was the wonder even of Rome herself.

But how is it today? Where now are those two proud cities, Corinth and Ephesus? Where now their splendid buildings, their crowding commerce, and the voices of the traffickers? Where now the merry laughter, and the dance music across the bay? The Corinth of that time is only a skeleton of stony ruins, deserted and empty. And as for mighty Ephesus—the broad marshes where once she stood are today a barren solitude,

the silence broken only by the lonely cry of the bittern. For "*sic transit gloria mundi.*"

Yet across those silent spaces of the dead past is still echoing down to us today this triumphant cry: "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. . . . Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

In the first alternate Lesson, St. Paul is writing from Corinth, to the Christians at the world's capital. He particularly assures them, and us, that we all are God's children. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." What matter then "the sufferings of this present time"? Can we not bear them for a little while, with Him beside us? For no power imaginable "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The third and last of these selections consists of a few words only, but these are spoken by Christ Himself, and they are full of comfort. They are the opening words of His goodbye talk to His disciples, the night before His death. Their hearts are heavy

with sorrow and foreboding, as so many others have been since, but He bids them trust Him still. They are not losing Him, He is only going on before, to make ready the future for them. And so we too must follow on. If we only keep Him in sight, we shall always find the road. And we cannot miss the gate at nightfall.

At this point in the service, in this same edition, we find a feature which is both new and old—a prayer for the dead. For the past three hundred and fifty years there had been no such prayer in the Prayer Book. Why? Because in the sixteenth century the pure and simple belief of earlier days had become associated with corrupt teaching, in the lately invented doctrine of purgatory. So all reference to those gone before had become merely a matter of begging them out of punishment. Therefore the practice of praying for the dead was dropped, and in 1552 the beautiful forms so dear to many hearts were omitted from the public services. In these later years, however, much quiet re-thinking has been done. Panic fear has subsided, misunder-

standing has been cleared away, and once more we remember our dear ones in our prayers.

Do any of us still hesitate? Let us look back at history and reassure ourselves. All human beings—pagan, heathen, what you will—in all lands and all centuries, have remembered their departed in their prayers. Who taught them to do this? Was it not God Himself?

Coming closer to our own spiritual inheritance, we note this fact—that for at least two centuries before Christ, prayers for the dead were in use in every Jewish synagogue, wherever in the world Jews were found, as well as in the temple at Jerusalem. As before, indeed, they had been used in Egypt, by both Egyptians and Jews.

A still more impressive fact to be noticed—Christ upbraided the Pharisees scathingly for their corruption of the services, but His condemnation never included this usage. On the contrary, He offered prayers for the dead Himself, publicly, every sabbath day.

And throughout the early Christian Church there is neither hesitation nor mis-

giving in this regard. A notable example of the universal practice we find in St. Paul's last letter. We hear the Apostle praying for his dear friend, Onesiphorus—"The Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day." And on the tombs of the early Christians in the catacombs we read such inscriptions as these: "Mayst thou live in peace!" "May God Christ Almighty refresh thy spirit!" So again in the early liturgies, the earliest forms of the service of the Holy Communion—those bearing the names of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Rome, Carthage, Gaul. And through the last named, we remember, we trace the ancestry of the Communion service of the Prayer Book. All these ancient services contain prayers for the dead.

Finally, the testimony of history is seconded by reason and commonsense. For those whom we call dead have only passed beyond our present, physical sight. They are more alive than we ourselves. In fine, "there is no death; what seems so is transition." "Death, it is a heathen word; the Christian cannot die." Therefore, let us never give up praying for our loved ones. Let us ask of our

Father's infinite love that their sins, contracted in this life, may be done away. And moreover, and for ever and for ever, that they may "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

"How can I cease to pray for thee? Somewhere
In God's great universe thou art today;
Can He not reach thee with His tender care?
Will He not hear me, when for thee I pray?"

"Then all the more, because thou canst not hear,
Poor human words of blessing will I pray,
O true, brave heart! God bless thee, whereso'er
In His great universe thou art today!"

Here the first part of this solemn service closes with the ancient, priestly benediction. Through thousands of years, since long before the days when Jesus often heard them, these words of blessing have been in use. In ancient form they ran like this:

"Jehovah bless thee,
And keep thee:
Jehovah make his face shine upon thee,
And be gracious unto thee:
Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee,
And give thee peace."

The second part of the burial service, to be sung or said at the grave, begins with a very extraordinary composition. This is an anthem consisting of three sections. The introductory lines are taken from the fourteenth chapter of the book of Job. They are spoken by Job himself, as he meditates on God's omnipotence and eternity, and on the contrasting frailty of humanity. The final section is simply a further development of the heart of the anthem.

The central portion, consisting of only two sentences, is an English version of an ancient Latin hymn, of about the year 900. The authorship of this hymn is ascribed to a learned Benedictine monk of St. Gall, in Switzerland, Notker by name. Tradition declares that it was inspired by an experience of its author, one day among the Alps. According to one account, Notker saw in the distance some workmen building a bridge. They were stretching it from precipice to precipice, across a deep mountain gorge. As the monk stood on the mountainside, watching these men, he noted the fearful peril of their un-

dertaking—that one slip would be enough to plunge them to destruction. He bethought him, moreover, “how uncertain our own condition is”; how continually danger surrounds us all. Only a touch of illness, only a careless misstep, and we are gone. And pondering this universal truth, he exclaimed, “In the midst of life we are in death.”

In the daily services of the Middle Ages Notker's hymn was in constant use, notably in the final service at midnight. It became a remarkable war song too. For it must have been unspeakably impressive on the field of battle, when the marshaled army chanted it before advancing against the enemy. Eloquent then indeed the uplifted prayer—“In the midst of life we are in death; of whom may we seek for succour, but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased?”

Finally, in 1549, the great hymn took its place in the Burial Office. And once more in the presence of death, its voice is profoundly eloquent beside the grave. For “It has a solemn magnificence and a wailing prayerfulness which are unsurpassable.”

Lately, however, to this great hymn has been added an alternate choice, consisting of four verses of Scripture. The first verse is a promise made by Jesus to His first disciples, when He tells them that every soul that comes to Him shall be given the bread of eternal life, and shall in no wise be cast out. In the second verse St. Paul speaks, declaring that "He that raised up Jesus from the dead" will also raise us up, if only we have ourselves the spirit of Jesus. Finally King David expresses, for us all, an overflowing gladness in the blessed truth of immortality.

After this anthem the body is reverently committed to the ground—"Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The ceremony of casting three handfuls of earth upon the body has been practised for thousands of years. Christians are only following, in this suggestive custom, the example of their pagan brothers of the past. The Romans buried their dead beside the highroad, as if to keep them still in touch with the life of today. Then, to throw three handfuls of earth on the dead body constituted legal

burial. And any traveler, passing by, might also cast his three handfuls of dust, and so pay his own tribute of respect.

So Horace asks remembrance for himself—

“Thrice with kindly dust

Bestrew my corpse, and then press onward as thou wilt.”

A trumpet voice is heard out of heaven—
“From henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord: even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labors.”

And with suitable prayers, and benediction from the Epistle to the Hebrews, the great and beautiful service comes to its close.

In ancient words of prayer, which have come down to us across thirteen hundred years, offered before God's throne by forty generations, so let us pray to Him today—
“O God, the protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; Increase and multiply upon us thy mercy; that, thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our Lord.”

"For what are men better than sheep or goats,
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them
friend?

For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

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